

January 15, 2009

Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc.

Vol. XXX No. 5

WHAT

NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF PSPCS

WHERE

DES MOINES MASONIC TEMPLE 2208 S. 223rd St. (Take Midway exit #149 west off I-5...go to first stop light west of Pacific Hwy. South...Turn right.)

WHEN

Thursday, January 15th 7:00 p.m. till 10:00 p.m. (doors open about 6:00 p.m.)

WHY

Its deja vu all over again. We will do our December Christmas repast and gift exchange meeting in January. After our dinner, a Short business meeting and then Santa will arrive. No Show & Tell, auction or buy and sell tables....Just lots of fun with our gift exchange.

TWAS THE SEASON TO BE SNOWED OUT: HO...HO...HO !!!

And where were you on December 18th when winter decended on us like stink on a skunk? Hopefully you did not try to attend our meeting (which we had canceled). And, if you did venture out you were able to venture back to your warm snug abode without problems. We tried to get the word out the best we could of the meeting's cancellation but some of you may not have gotten the word. Sorry.

But, take heart. All is not lost. We are just going to move our very popular Christmas repast and gift exchange to our January meeting...with the hope that the weather will have returned to our normal rain..rain..rain! So be happy, rewrap your gift and join us for our special Christmas meeting. (Here is the info. you need from the December Bellows. Ed.)

Here is how our special Christmas meeting is going to happen. (Remember, this is the meeting to which you are encouraged to bring your: spouse, life partner, significant other, best friend (either sex no animals please), your special guest etc. You get the idea) First, we will "chow down" on a repast set forth by our secretary, Don Friend, who has learned at the feet of our retired secretary, Shirley Sparrow, who always put forth a most delicious repast.

After everyone has eaten and burped there will be a very short business meeting while we await the arrival of good old Santa, who, bless his overworked heart, has agreed to take time off from being a Wal-mart greeter...to assist us in our famous gift exchange. Remember, our gift exchange works like this:

Each person, who wants to take part, has brought a nice wrapped photographica gift worth at least \$10.00. (Now, you don't need to bring a gift in order to enjoy this fun event. Just fill your glasss and sit back and sip watching the fun unfold.) First, everyone who brought a gift draws a number from Bill, the large elf's, hat. This is the order in which you will select your gift. Second, after you select and unwrap your gift you may...in fact are encouraged to...exchange it with any other unwrapped gift that you may covet. This means you are better off drawing a high number; which thus gives you more unwrapped gifts from which to choose. However, poor number one had no chance to exchange so at the end the person who had number one has the pick of ALL the now unwrapped gifts...thus number one is the very best number to draw,

After Santa flies off our special Christmas meeting will end with a bit of general clean up and happy conversations of the season; along with sparkling cider sipping and nummie munching.

We hope to see a large number of members and their guests at what is one of our two most popular meetings of the year...along with our special Show Experience Weekend guest speaker meeting. Please join us! HO...HO...HO !!!

DUES ARE DUE...PLEASE.

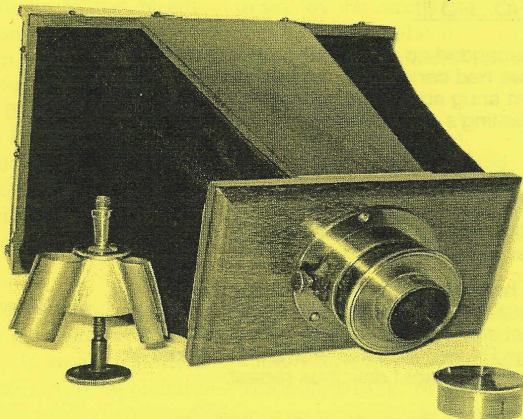
BACKSIDE INFORMATION ★ ★ ★

Last month I stated that Dues were do...and that they were. Something important you needed to do! This month you only have about one Month left before we will have to drop you from our membership roll. Don't let that happen. Dues for 2009 Club year are still only \$20.00. Please send your payment to Shirley: (address at the bottom of page two.)...or pay her at the meeting. We look forward to seeing you in 2009. Thank you.

ITS TIME TO BUY YOUR SHOW TABLES:

As you just noticed your Bellows envelope also contained your 2009 Show brochure with table reservation form. Now is the time to reserve your table(s) for our April 4th 2009 Show at the Puyallup Fair & Events Center. Tables are still just \$40.00 for an 8 foot table with a free assistant per each table purchased. Please don't wait. Reserve your 2009 table(s) soon. A reservation now will help you to get your desired location in the hall and allow your Show Committee to more efficiently plan this years great Show. Remember, all PSPCS paid-up members are intitled to one FREE display table for the purpose of highlighting your collection and helping to further educate the public on the joys of photographica. You don't need to be a seller to be a shower. Join us.

From the Sept-Oct. 2008 Michigan Photographic Historical Society. Thanks Ed.



Le Scénographe, ca. 1880

We almost despaired of ever seeing the seller of this Le Scénographe. Made about 1880 by E. Deyrolle, Paris, it features a brass Darlot lens and black cloth collapsible bag bellows. The body, lensboard and two movable support struts are each made of polished wood. Our half plate version came with the unusual tripod head for three legs of different sizes. My wife Bobbi sewed a new black silk bellows cover, retaining the original lining. It was certainly worth waiting for this treasure far beyond the agreed upon time in a parking lot halfway between the seller's Seattle-area home and our Portland home.

— Ralph London, Portland, OR

THIS MONTHS MYSTERY QUESTION

With thanks to the Western Photographic Historical Society

Answer at end of newsletter

What camera series, introduced in 1932, had the first models in black only with square cornered features?



THE BELLOWS Newsletter is published 10 times per year by Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc. Information for The Bellows should be send to Bill Kimber, 1413 Weathervane Drive, Tacoma, WA 98466-5712, (253) 564-4046, billkimber@webtv.net

The P.S.P.C.S. internet address is www.pspcs.org

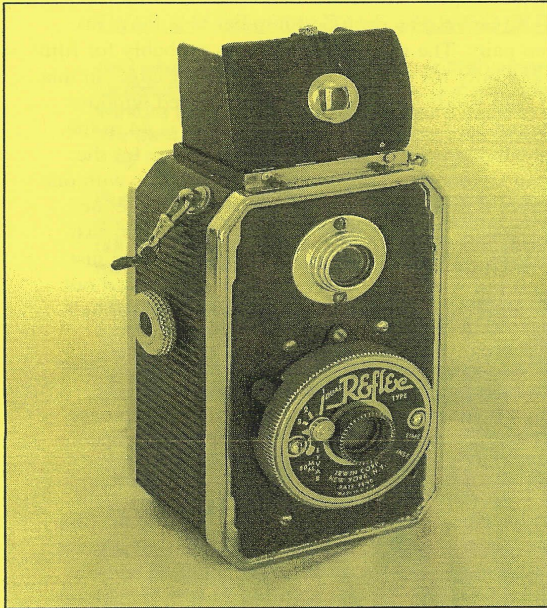
Dues are \$20.00 per year and should be sent to Secretary/Treasurer Shirley Sparrow, 300 Pease Road, Cle Elum, WA 98922, (509) 674-1916, sesparrow9@msn.com P.S.P.C.S. members receive first notification of our yearly April show.

PRESIDENT: DARREL WOMACK (206) 244-6831 dlwcam669@yahoo.com

Irwin Cohen's Cameras

by Ron Kuykendall

Most of us know the "sardine can" cameras of the late thirties: vertical, half-frame 127 format, metal bodies of rectangular shape, rounded corners, with backs held in place by the shape of the metal edges. This is the same technology as the collectable, inked, stamped, painted, and embossed metal boxes of 1001 uses of the plastic bagless world before WW II. The only two screws in all versions of the camera held a large Tums-shaped lens/shutter unit to the camera. There was a great variety of names-Kandor, Kandor Jr, Comet, Lark, Royal, at least. Some were painted, some had patches of fake leather coverings, some art deco metal plates. In one series the flat metal front was stamped to look more like a camera. One suspicious story about the origin of the design is



that a sailor returning from the Mediterranean area convinced a toy-maker to use the design for a camera. Irwin, the toy-maker, decided to use the popular 127 rollfilm. While the legend may contain some truth, the variety of décor and the simplicity of design was, no doubt the genius of Irwin Cohen. Lens, shutter housing, and shutter varied little throughout the series – box camera shutter, usually B-I, fixed waterhouse

stop, upgraded on some models to 3 or 4 stops. Metal face plates varied, lens was the incredibly poor "50mm Eyvar" fixed focus meniscus lens, probably by Graf. In comparison, P&S lenses look like Raptars. The top of the line Royal series sported a two element f7.7 Seyvar acromat, only marginally better, and 4 stops, – same box camera shutter. The Royal Special upgraded to a Wollensak 4.5 anastigmat with a real diaphragm and an Alpax Jr shutter – now a useable, pocketable people camera with a 4x6 portrait frame.

Irwin had some experience in camera making – his 1930 Model 16 movie camera used construction similar to the later sardine cans, and multiple décor changes passing for new models with modest technical changes. Most interesting was his 1930 daylight magazine that was darkroom loaded – apparently the first. Irwin also made an unusual 16mm projector and a number of toys including a hand cranked, battery powered 16mm loop projector – again possibly a first.

Irwin also produced a Dual Reflex using the Eyvar lens and the upgraded 4 stop shutter assembly – secured with two screws. The body was of vertical design, bakelite, using the half frame 127, now landscape format. Viewing and taking lenses were the same – both fixed focus. Front and rear metal plates were the same – and for the first time an Irwin camera sported a knurled screw to hold the back light-tight. The front showed an amazing ten screws to hold all components in place! The four-piece hood protected the ground glass reflex finder and held components of the optical eye level finder. A very compact, light weight body – 2x2 3/4x4 3/4 – was nice to handle and quite functional.

Irwin's top of the line and most ingenious camera was also probably his downfall as a camera designer. The Irwin Super-tri-flex camera was a full featured twin lens reflex. Irwin upgraded both lenses to Wollensak 3.5 anastigmats, with full focusing by a knob on the front of the camera lens plate – unit focus. Shutter was now Wollensak Alphax, Jr -25 to 200 with a diaphragm aperture. Few American cameras of 1939 had as good or better specs – and very few of those would be as reliable as the Wollensak version of Irwin's diminutive TLR. Even more remarkable was the bright reflex image (3.5 viewing lens) and a focusing magnifier, two tripod sockets for portrait or landscape format and a cable release. The only modern feature missing was provision for flash which Wollensak hadn't developed and wouldn't be popular until after WW II. No American TRL of the era had so many features – Kodak's tank like Reflex didn't

continued on page 4...

appear until 1946 – with front element focus, no optical eye level finder, and a stretched lens formula that frequently left the edges soft while the center was sharp. Ciro had pretty much the same lenses but was bulkier – although easier to handle, but had no optical finder. Argus was less impressive with a darker reflex finder, front element focus, and a 4.5 lens slightly inferior to the Wollensak. Spartus and Universal did not have a TLR until after WW II. Argoflex prices were about \$35 – Ciro about \$54 – pre-war. Irwin marketed mostly through drug stores and “dime stores.” The Kandor varieties were from \$1.49 to \$4.95 – the Reflex series from \$4.95 to \$25.

A threatened generous George pressured Irwin to get out of the camera business about 1940 – Irwin took his camera patents and moved to a family plastics factory in Mass. where he applied his genius to such creations as Hula-hoop, Frisbee, cars for Barbie, and items for Mattel. Needless to say, by the time the Japanese tidal wave hit, Irwin was well insulated from the misfortunes of the Kodak dominated camera business, and a millionaire.

Perhaps there is a lesson from history in all this if the classic example of American capitalism, Kodak, had not destroyed all the American genius and innovation in the domestic camera business, could that genius and innovation have better resisted the flood of Japanese technology of the 1960's?

Eho Stereo

by Ron Kuykendall

In an ad in *Popular Photography*, Oct 1937 – their first year of publication – Burleigh Brooks of New York offered an Eho Stereo camera. Burleigh Brooks was famous for their BeeBee line of press cameras, enlargers and other house branded items imported from small manufacturers mostly in Germany. The Eho was touted to be “the finest value in stereo box cameras.” Typical fixed shutter and focus, with a Duplar lens – two meniscus lenses like the rapid rectilinear – with f11 and f22 stops – marginally useable in Tucson's sun with modern ASA 100 film. A slide allowed the user to block off one stereo lens unit, converting the camera to a 6x6 format. Two bubble levels were mounted on the top of the camera. Camera was easy and natural to use, tripod recommended for the 1/50 or slower shutter. Images are as you would expect – fairly good sharpness between about 5 feet and about 25 feet – typical of acromat lenses

– slightly better than a good quality meniscus lens. In my testing, maybe slightly better stereo lenses than the Sputniks simple anastigmat lenses – and at this quality the ability of the Sputnik to focus from 5 feet to infinity doesn't create a better stereo image. I attached close-up lenses to my Eho and achieved quite good images of objects at 3 feet with the background both pleasantly out of focus and losing the stereo effect beyond about 6 feet, emphasizing the object at three feet.

Film handling of the Eho tho raises a lot of questions. My camera, apparently not the first model, has two elongated red windows for no reason I can imagine except a balanced appearance. The left red window is centered on the left image. Using today's film with a 6x6 numbering down the center, its simple to advance film – first image is #1 in the left lens. Number 2 frame is automatically in the right lens. Next stereo pair is with # 3 in the left red window etc – advancing by each odd number to achieve six stereo pairs. The right red window is probably for film marked only for 6x9 images on the lower edge. In this case film is advanced to #1 in the right red window followed by #2 in the left window. Next is #4 in the right window and #5 in the left red window for the second stereo pair. This creates 5 stereo pairs with one (number 8 in the left red window) a 6x6 image, not a stereo pair. You can easily convert the Eho to 6x6 format by pulling out the proper stop and using just the left red window. However I have not figured out how to get 12 6x6 images with film marked for 6x9 images.

Voigtlander and Spartus among others used three red windows to achieve the proper sequence. The manual is more confusing on this point , a sequence of #1 left, #3 right, #4 left, #6 right, and #7 left, – five exposures with more spacing between stereo sets. It appears one can get only 8 6x6 images with this type film. All this is really moot because all film today is marked for 8, 12, and 16 frames, but it gives you some appreciation of what skills it took to be a photographer and the versatility needed in the period before WWII when the technology was changing so rapidly. If anyone has knowledge of these early roll-films and how they were marked I'd really like the information.

+++++
+ Answer: The CONTAX
+ series was made from
+ 1932-1961. It was a well
+ made 35mm range finder
+ camera that is still being
+ used today.

